

IN MEMORY OF PETTY OFFICER
FIRST CLASS VINCENT E.
PARKER, UNITED STATES NAVY

HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 13, 2001

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, today I rise before the House of Representatives to honor the life of an outstanding American, Vincent E. Parker. United States Navy Petty Officer First Class Vincent E. Parker is originally from Preston, Mississippi. Tragically, Petty Officer Parker was lost on Sunday morning, November 18, 2001, along with one of his shipmates, Petty Officer Third Class Benjamin Johnson while serving his country in the Persian Gulf.

Vincent Parker, noted for his devotion to God and country, grew up in rural eastern Mississippi. He attended Macon Elementary School and graduated from Nanih Waiya High School in Louisville. He was a devout member of the Assembly of God Church in Columbus, Mississippi, and he grew up in a loving, well-respected family with five siblings.

Like his brother John, he enlisted in the Navy upon graduation from high school. He successfully climbed the ladder as an enlisted man and was rated as an Engineman First Class Petty Officer. He was serving onboard the USS *Peterson*. This deployment was to be his last, completing a successful career in the Navy. His mission on November 18th was to enforce the United Nations sanctions imposed upon Iraq following the Gulf War. He boarded *Samra*, a ship believed to be smuggling oil for Saddam Hussein.

Mr. Speaker, I want to pay tribute to Petty Officer Vincent Parker for his 19 years of service to the United States of America and the United States Navy. He is also to be commended for his life-long devotion as a son, husband, brother, father and citizen. Petty Officer Parker is survived by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Glenn D. Parker Jr. He is survived by his wife, Charlotte, and their two children, Vincent Jr. (age fourteen) and Rachel (age twelve). He leaves behind his sister Ruth Marie, and his four brothers, Glenn, Andy, Steven, and John.

Vincent was known onboard the *Peterson* not only for his Naval leadership, but also for the example he set as a citizen and man of God. He was simply known as "Butch" to his friends. He enjoyed the simple pleasures in life such as family and deer hunting. He will most be remembered for his devotion to God, country, and family.

Mr. Speaker, I ask our colleagues to join me in remembering an American hero, Petty Officer First Class Vincent E. Parker. Our sincere prayers and thoughts are with the Parker family at this difficult time. May God bless the Parker family, and may God continue to bless the United States of America with heroes like Vincent Parker.

INTRODUCTION OF SPECTRUM LICENSE POLICY ACT

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 13, 2001

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to be an original cosponsor of the Spectrum Li-

cense Policy Act of 2001, and I am hopeful we, can pass this bill into law this year before we adjourn.

After months of negotiation in this matter, I am glad we have a deal that represents a win for everyone. It benefits the government by providing ten billion dollars in revenues to our Treasury. It benefits the original license holder by preserving the benefit of the bargain it had originally negotiated. It benefits our bankruptcy code, by preserving the doctrine of the stay and the power of the courts to enforce it, even against the government. And it benefits consumers by permitting the spectrum to come on the market as soon as possible, fostering much needed competition.

In a very real sense we have reached this point because of the interest and involvement of the Judiciary Committee. When the Federal Communications Commission was seeking to unilaterally take away NextWave's spectrum assets, in violation of the automatic stay, this Committee weighed in to preserve the integrity of the bankruptcy code. The FCC was unable to ram their legislation through and the parties, to their credit, continued negotiating.

I am hopeful that this bill will serve as a precedent for achieving settlements for other similarly impacted parties. For example, I would note that Urban Communicators PCS LP, a minority owned enterprise, has also filed for bankruptcy and been engaged in a dispute with the FCC over spectrum rights. I would urge the FCC and the Congress to take up their case on an expedited schedule as well.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO J. PAUL BROWN

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 13, 2001

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize J. Paul Brown for his contributions to the community of Ignacio, Colorado. J. Paul's civic involvement in the community spans over twenty years and involves the areas of agriculture, education, planning, and economic growth. I am proud to recognize him for his hard work and dedication in the following achievements.

J. Paul graduated from New Mexico State University with honors in 1975. In that same year, J. Paul became a rancher and entered the cattle and sheep market, a business he still runs today. In 1978, he began his civic service and was elected to the La Plata County Farm Bureau, serving later as President of the organization. He served on the State Board of Directors for the Colorado Farm Bureau, President of the Colorado Wool Growers, and was honored as the Colorado Wool Grower Of The Year in 1996.

J. Paul continued his service to the community and state as a member of the La Plata Planning Commission, Sergeant of Arms for Colorado Counties, Inc., and as Chairman of the Region 9 Economic Development District. As a father and firm believer in education, J. Paul was elected to the Ignacio School Board of Directors. His performance led him to the honor of being one of only five members in the state to be nominated for the State School Board.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize J. Paul Brown and his dedication to the commu-

nity of Ignacio, Colorado. J. Paul comes from a long line of dedicated community activists, following in the footsteps of his parents, Casey and Jean, who have recently passed a milestone of their own by celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary this year. His own dedication to the community is amazing when one considers he has raised a family of four along with his wonderful Debbie, during his service to the people of Ignacio and the State of Colorado. Please continue your service to the community J. Paul and good luck in your future endeavors.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE PROGRAMS ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2001

SPEECH OF

HON. JERRY MORAN

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 11, 2001

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman Chris Smith for his leadership this year. Our new Chairman of the Veterans Affairs Committee has served our Veterans well.

I am proud of the bill now before the House, H.R. 3447. It is a compromise that was achieved over several months by the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees. It contains measures from the health care bill that I introduced earlier this year, H.R. 2792, as well as proposals from a number of Senate bills. This bill will provide veterans greater confidence in their health care system, along with higher accountability for the VA.

Important Provisions of this bill:

Enables VA nurses to pursue advanced degrees while continuing to care for veterans. This aids recruitment and retention of nurses within the VA health care system, and promotes higher quality of care for veterans.

Mandates Saturday premium pay to certain VA patient care staff, such as licensed vocational nurses, pharmacists, and respiratory, physical, and occupational therapists. This provision will ensure that the VA remains competitive with other providers.

Requires the VA to develop a nationwide policy on health care staffing to promote safe and high quality care for veterans.

Establishes a 12-member National Commission on VA Nursing that would enhance the recruitment and retention of VA nurses and strengthen the nursing profession in the VA and nationwide.

Authorizes service dogs to be provided to severely disabled veterans suffering from spinal cord injuries, other mobility diseases, hearing loss or other types of disabilities that having a trained service dog would assist.

Modifies VA's system of determining "ability to pay" for VA health care services by introducing an index used by the Department of Housing and Urban Development to determine family income thresholds. This would reduce hospital co-payments by 80 percent compared to current law, for near-poor veterans who require acute hospital inpatient care.

Strengthens the mandate for the VA to maintain capacity in specialized medical programs for veterans by requiring each network of VA facilities to maintain a proportional share of national capacity in specialized health care